

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

May 10, 2006

DRAFT

Board Members Present: Bruce Cohen; Sherry Mangrum; Howard Turney; Consevella James; David Tindall; Lisa McGee; Karen Worley; Rich Huddleston; June Simpson; Sherri Jo McLemore; Yvette Murphy; Debra Hurd

Board Members Absent: Benny Gooden; Carla Reyes; Dana McClain; Dean Burbank; Devan Hope; Jerry Walsh; John Smith; Johnny Key; June Lang; Paul Kelly; Rose Warfield-McGill; Stephanie Hammett; Tiffany Waters; Diane Robinson; Connie Hickman Tanner; Jerry Jones; Joyce Warren; Rose Bates;

DCFS/DHHS Staff Present: Roy Kindle; Cecile Blucker; Billye Burke; Pat Page; Rosemary White; Janie Huddleston; Mona Davis; Connie Dyer; Christina Lynn; Debbie Shiell; Miranda Raines; Kim Alexander; Debbie Roark; Dan McCluskey

Welcome and Introductions

Pat Page welcomed all Board Members. Participants made individual introductions.

Review of Minutes

Ms. Page asked Board Members to review minutes of the previous meeting and called for questions. Minutes were approved as written.

A copy of a letter of congratulation from the Administration for Children and Families Regional Office on the DCFS progress reports was distributed, along with a copy of the Compliance Outcome Report (COR) for March 2006.

Update on Implementation of Plans

Rosemary White reported that improvements are being made on the Special Unit to tend to the needs of children's medical appointments. All hiring in that area has been done. Tonya Tackett is working on getting her staffing done in the Pulaski office. Meetings with health services staff are being made. Ten high-risk emergency beds are in-place with Ms. Tackett as gate keeper. Provider issues are being worked out and these beds are a tremendous help. Staff has all the equipment they need (computers and cell phones). Weekly supervisor meetings are held and in-service training and there is discussion of difficult to place kids.

Staffing

Eighteen stipend students have been assigned. Staffing needs have been met at 83% and work continues in training, monitoring, compliance and best practice. Information from work groups on court procedures, on-call and medical procedure plans has been submitted to Mr. Kindle for review. Efforts are being made to involve more stakeholders in the Foster Home recruit plan conference. There has been significant promotion of foster care training conferences in each area and there has been a good turnout statewide. Foster parent training is held on local levels for continuing education hours and networking opportunities. These will be informational meetings with a variety of topics. Rich Huddleston asked about funding resources and needs. Mr. Kindle responded that efforts to obtain funding would be made and Mr. Huddleston offered his help. Ms. White said that staffing will not hinder Best Practices. There are site visits to monitor Best Practice and Compliance Issues.

Ms. Page addressed single point of entry (SPOE) before admitting children to inpatient facility - therapeutic Foster Home versus other alternatives. There has been no response from private providers. Mr. Turney asked if health care specialists were involved in placement decisions. Mr. Kindle said that they are. Ms. James asked if we are making a difference in the provider evaluation on a case-by-case basis using the single point of entry process. Mr. Turney asked if there were placement agreements and Ms. Page responded that there are, but there will continue to be reviews and adjustments statewide on the practice. Mr. Huddleston asked about performance indicators and how they compared to staffing, and if there was a report which would reflect the statistics. Ms. Page said that such a report is in progress and would be shared with him.

Pat handed out Assessment of Systems for Best Case Practice information and asked for input. DCFS has asked for supervisor and worker input and this process should be completed June 2nd. CQ1 central is assisting in this process.

Financial Status

Cecile Blucker distributed information on the budget and discussed details relating to the biennial budget. Board Payments and Adoption are areas being reviewed at this time. Everything is on target. Ms. McLemore asked about the possibility of decreasing the amount of mileage reflected in the handout and was told that with the use of state cars and computers this figure should show improvement and monitoring will be done in this area. Mr. Kindle said that there are times we must comply with judge's orders and an influx of children and finances would have to reflect this even in light of the advances made to lower travel expenses.

Mr. Cohen asked about pandemic effects on staffing. Mr. Kindle said we are using contingencies from other situations and applying it to the pandemic issues.

Family Team Meeting Pilot

Ms. White and Mr. Kindle discussed the Family Team Meetings (FTM) in Area 2 with the Board. Mr. Kindle stated that the family is in the drivers seat of their case planning. In early June we will have the results and recommendations of the family teen meetings. Workers have been valuable in targeting these families and helping to bring permanency to children. There have been excellent parent counsel meetings held. An evaluation will be made on this process and areas will be targeted that need to be enhanced. Mr. Kindle said case plans need to be part of routine business. Ms. Page said workers may not be able to routinely run these meetings. Mr. Kindle said we may need facilitators. Ms. Davis said that parents are leaving with a better attitude following the Family Team Meetings.. The AOC sponsored art test for foster kids was a huge success.

Special Speaker (Connie Dyer)

Ms. Dyer spoke to the group about Compassion Satisfaction Burnout and Compassion Fatigue/Secondary Trauma in Child Welfare Workers. Surveys were sent out, and although the group was highly stressed, they gave good marks to their quality of supervision. There seemed to be more correlation between burnout and the type of cases being handled versus the number of cases handled. Workers were asked for ideas on helpful changes that could be made. Older workers (85%) have internalized their feelings of failure. Personal and supportive characteristics in supervisory staff were stated to be the most important factor. Compassion Fatigue is a traumatic event. Mr. Kindle said that the agency is dealing with retention issues and presenting a healthy organization. Ms. Simpson said that those on the job the longest may have a higher rate of satisfaction.

Additional Information

Ms. Page said that the Pulaski County Review Executive Summary had been sent out by e-mail to board members (January 10th). The DCFS staff will be attending the States and Tribes conference in Washington D.C. the week of June 19th.

Next Scheduled Meeting

The next meeting of the DCFS Advisory Board will be Wednesday, August 23rd from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. The meeting will be held in conference room 5368, on the fifth floor at our office building located at 700 Main Street, Little Rock, AR.